

SENATE RESOLUTION 7031 of the First Extraordinary Session

By Watson

A RESOLUTION to recognize and congratulate Chattanooga Coca-Cola upon the occasion of its 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

WHEREAS, Coca-Cola was created in 1886 in Atlanta, when pharmacist Dr. John S. Pemberton created a flavored syrup in a three-legged brass kettle in his backyard; for the first thirteen years of the drink's existence, it could be sold only at soda fountains, where the syrup and soda water were combined to create the unique flavor of Coke; and

WHEREAS, in 1899, Chattanooga businessmen Benjamin F. Thomas and Joseph B. Whitehead traveled to Atlanta and successfully pitched the idea of bottling Coke; thus, Chattanooga Coca-Cola became the first bottler of one of the world's most iconic brands; and

WHEREAS, with the support of colleague John T. Lupton, Mr. Thomas and Mr. Whitehead opened the world's first Coca-Cola Bottling Company at 17 Market Street in downtown Chattanooga, where Patten Parkway now stands; as the business continued to thrive, the plant was moved to 201 Broad Street and, ultimately, in 1970, to its current location at 4000 Amnicola Highway, where the company now produces approximately 36 million cases of drinks a year; and

WHEREAS, in 1926, Coca-Cola United in Birmingham, Alabama, currently the second largest privately held Coke bottler, purchased the Chattanooga Coca-Cola Bottling Company; during that time, Chattanooga was the home of some of the other biggest Coke bottlers around the globe, including John T. Lupton, Summerfield Johnson, J. Frank Harrison, Carl Navarre, and others who lived in Chattanooga and owned bottling operations around the world; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of current CEO John Sherman, who has been at the helm of the company for the past four years, the family-owned Coke United has grown its staff

and size by more than three and a half times by acquiring many of the bottling operations spun off by the Coca-Cola Company, which has focused on the more profitable syrup production and developing other products; and

WHEREAS, today, the Chattanooga-based Tennessee Valley division of Coca-Cola United employs more than 750 employees at its production and distribution facilities in Chattanooga and Cleveland, as well as its routes across the southeastern part of the state and in Northwest Georgia, and in 2016, the company opened a \$67 million distribution center on Shepherd Road in Chattanooga; and

WHEREAS, with an eye to the future and improving communities through sustainable practices, the Tennessee Valley division of the company is making strides to promote curbside recycling in Chattanooga and beyond and partnering with other organizations to ensure that more homes have and make use of recycling carts; and

WHEREAS, for 120 years, Chattanooga Coca-Cola has been integral to the economic vitality of its region, and it is fitting that the historic business be recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we recognize and congratulate Chattanooga Coca-Cola upon the occasion of its 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary, wishing the organization much continued success in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.